

Santa Clara Libertarian

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SURPRISING LACK OF CANDIDATES! Finally Ray Strong, Joe Dehn, John Hugdahl and Seven Others Coaxed To Serve, at Annual Meeting of LPSCC



Marv Rudin
chairs meeting

It was no surprise that Marv Rudin didn't run for a fourth term as LPSCC chairman at the annual meeting on Jan. 11th at the Campbell Community Center. Everyone knew he'd said that this would be his last tour as chair when he ran in Jan. 2000, and reiterated that intent in the front page article in the Dec./Jan issue of the Santa Clara Libertarian. What was a surprise was that Marv (Newsletter Chair) and newcomer Zander Collier (Publicity Chair) were the only nominees on the first round of nominations!



Jon Hugdahl
reports finances

But all's well that ends well. After the unanimous election of Marv and Zander, the spectre of having a two-man Excom moved several old timers and some new faces to bite the bullet and offer to fill the other positions when Marv decided to reopen nominations and go down through all remaining offices again, and we ended up with a pretty potent group of Excom members, in addition to Marv and Zander, headed by Ray Strong as Chair, Joe Dehn as Vice Chair, Jon Hugdahl repeating as Treasurer, Dennis Unphress as Secretary, Joe Beene as Membership Chair, Frank Groffie as Fundraising Chair, Scott Lieberman as Campaign Chair, and John Webster, Activities Chair, Mark Hinkle, LPC Rep, and Joe Dehn LPC Alternate Rep. Also elected were 13 delegates (see article below), and Laura Stewart was elected Platform Committee rep. ■



Rudin hands gavel to Ray Strong

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LPC CONVENTION AT SJ DOUBLETREE

LPSCC Delegates Help Elect EXCOM and Review Platform & Bylaws

Fifteen delegates from the LPSCC were at the recent annual LPC state convention in San Jose at the Doubletree Hotel Feb. 16-19.

There were five unfilled slots this year because last year, the LPC bylaws were changed to a formula that increased the number of elected delegates allocated to our region to 18, and at our LPSCC annual meeting in on Jan. 11th only 13 members submitted their names for nomination. But alternate delegates were electable

at the convention at the start of each day's session. Two members took advantage of this, and two elected delegates didn't show. Some party officers - county and state chairs - are automatically delegates, so new LPSCC Chair Ray Strong and old LPC Chair Mark Hinkle added two to our total to make it 15. Thanks goes to these members and officers who served as delegates: John Webster, Dennis Umphress, Michael Laursen, Laura Stewart, Marv Rudin, Travis Jones, Scott Lieberman, Mary Gingell, Linda Hinkle, Elizabeth Brierly, Dana Albrecht, Bill White, Joe Dehn, Ray Strong, and Mark Hinkle. After all, without delegates there would be no convention. ■



Travis Jones



Bill White

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IRV ELECTIONS MAY SOON REVEAL TRUE LIBERTARIAN SENTIMENT IN SC COUNTY!

A Way To Overcome Wasted Vote Syndrome

Election Reform Conference at Stanford attracts third party people concerned with wasted vote barrier and old party members wanting efficient elections.

by Joe Dehn

Santa Clara County was host to the kick-off meeting of a major effort to bring Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) to this state.

The California Electoral Reform Conference, which was held 3 March at Stanford University, brought together activists from across the political chart who are interested in changing the way that elections are conducted.

Featured speakers were Stanford professor Pam Karlan, who provided an overview of different voting methods, the registrars of voters of three counties, and 1980 independent presidential candidate John Anderson.



Kathryn Ferguson
Santa Clara County Registrar

Santa Clara County LP activists Joe Dehn, Travis Jones, and Norm Nelson attended the conference, along with LPC Executive Director Juan Ros and San Mateo LP activist Linden Hsu.



John Anderson
Ex-presidential candidate

While discussion covered a variety of voting methods, the focus was clearly on IRV. IRV, which was just adopted by the LPC for the election of state party officers, allows each voter to rank the candidates for a single office by preference. If no candidate receives a majority of the first-choice votes, the preferences stated by the voters are used to calculate runoff results without voters having to return to the polls.

Also getting a lot of attention was the question of introducing modern voting technology — a vital step toward IRV because the punch-card ballots and other older technologies used in many California counties cannot easily accommodate the recording of ranked choices.

Riverside registrar Mischelle Townsend described the experience of her county, the first in the state to switch to touch-screen voting equipment. San Mateo registrar Warren Slocum included in his presentation a display of photographs of historic voting equipment, some dating back to the 19th Century. Three different vendors of touch-screen equipment provided demonstrations in the exhibit area.



Warren Slocum
San Mateo County Registrar

Santa Clara County is in a relatively good position for the introduction of IRV. Two years ago voters approved an amendment to the county charter which allows IRV to be used once the technology is available, and the county is now shopping for new equipment to replace the current punch-card system.

Once the new equipment is in place, which is expected to happen as soon as 2002, all that will be required to put IRV in effect for county elections is approval of the Board of Supervisors. The same equipment will also enable cities to use IRV, along with other forms of preference voting for multi-member bodies such as city councils.



Workshop (Juan Ros at left)

For more information about IRV and related issues of election reform, see:

Center for Voting and Democracy <http://www.fairvote.org/> California IRV Coalition <http://www.calirv.org/> ■

Executive Committee Sets Goals For 2001

Late in its session on Sunday morning March 4th, amid the background buzz of other patrons sharing Coco's banquet room, the LPSCC Excom finally got off of discussing and voting on administrative matters and got down to addressing the business of publicizing and growing the party. Well not exactly the business of how to get better results in these areas, but rather the business of setting measurable goals in four key areas by which the local LP's growth is to be judged monthly and at year end. In addition the business of granting a budget to support the Publicity Chair's written plan (see article, pg.6 of this issue) was discussed and a budget approved.

The goals approved by the Excom were:

1. Net Central Committee Membership increase of 60 members.
2. LP .85% of registered voters of SCC.
3. Run 8 candidates for nonpartisan office and elect 1.
4. A total of 500 volunteer actions during the year.

These goals were largely proposed by Chair Ray Strong and Vice Chair Joe Dehn. They apparently looked challenging but reasonable to them based on known past performance of the region, or in the case of "volunteer outreach actions", based on intuition, but not on a plan of how to achieve them by any of the responsible chairs. However Campaign Chair Scott Lieberman did agree to goal 3.

The first two goals are membership goals. Unfortunately Membership Chair Joe Beene was unable to attend, and no plan for recruiting of new LP registrants and members to meet the goals in these areas has yet been submitted. Also, while chair Zander Collier has a plan in place to engage in various community activities and to submit media announcements designed to get media coverage, no goals defined by measurable quantitative results were set yet for these efforts.

The following charts, which are maintained on the party web site (second one as a graph), and which will be updated and published in this newsletter monthly, show the challenge posed by goals 1 and 2 (see goals in red). The registration percentage has gone up significantly since

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1998	515	527	538	546	467	494	515	532	530	525	527	528
1999	549	531	531	520	546	543	541	551	566	556	561	559
2000	545	541	561	559	546	540	528	535	529	537	547	531
2001												591

LPSCC CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS - Doesn't include donors not signing pledge; target is shown in red

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1996 LP	0.58%											
1997 LP		0.61%										
1998 LP					0.66%							
1999 LP		0.69%										
2000 LP	5299	5343	5,348	5378	5377	5426	5,601	5611		5698	5869	5938
Total		710,745	717,999		721,963	726,313	740,584	744,440		761,960	789,332	795,928
		0.752%	0.745%		0.745%	0.747%	0.756%	0.754%		0.748%	0.744%	0.746%
2001 LP	5996	5996										
Total	801,589	799407										
	0.748%	0.750%										0.85%

SANTA CLARA COUNTY LP REGISTRATIONS - as number and as % of total county registrations

1997 - about 23%; but the number of CC members has remained stubbornly between 500 and 570 despite the national LP's major mailing campaign, "Archimedes" in '98 and '99. ■

YOU'RE INVITED TO NEXT MEETING OF PARTY ON APRIL 12 IN CAMPBELL



Chair Ray Strong
We invite you

Time: 7:30 p.m. for Pizza, meeting starts at 8 pm
Location: Campbell Community Center, Building Q, Roosevelt Redwood room.

Come and meet the new team for 2001. Come to pass needed bylaw changes. Come to learn how you - yes you - can win an election for a nonpartisan office without really trying. Come for the comraderie!

The Campbell Community Center is a complex of approximately 10 buildings on the Northwest corner of Winchester Blvd. and Campbell Ave. The nearest freeway offramp is at Hamilton and 17. Take Hamilton west to Winchester, Winchester south to Campbell Ave. then right to parking lot. The parking lot is on Campbell Ave. about 500 feet west of Winchester Blvd. Building Q is the building closest to the parking lot.

Agenda items will include:

- Progress Reports from the Officers
- Reports from the LP state convention
- Consideration of Bylaw changes
- Opportunities to win nonpartisan local offices in 2001
- Tax Day Plans
- Publicity Chairs Plan
- Cost and Time effective publicity ideas— car signs, OE cards

FREE STUFF IS YOURS FOR THE ASKING



Frank Groffie

by Frank Groffie
Fundraising Committee Chair
and Quartermaster Pro Tem

We're in the process of reassigning some of the items the LPSCC owns. Right now these possessions are in Marv Rudin's garage and storage unit. We own furniture, office tools and supplies, computer hardware and software, display items, and literature. Some of these items we will distribute to the various officers and committee chairs for their use in carrying out their duties. The plan is they will devote a tiny area of their garage or bedroom to an "LPSCC office" of their own. (Just a glorified desk, cabinet, or bookcase.)

My point is, we don't need a lot of these things. You may have any of these things FREE:

Desks (2), woodgrain laminate
Mating Chairs (3), large, wooden, brown vinyl upholstery
File cabinets (2), steel, off white, 4 drawers and 6 drawers
File cabinet, horizontal, woodgrain laminate, 3 drawers,
Chairs (35), wooden, folding
Table, wood top folding, approx. 2' by 3'
Computer cabinet
Computer cart

All are at least in good condition. You may get your free stuff by calling Marv Rudin (408-736-5626) by March 31 to make arrangements to see and to pick them up from his house in Sunnyvale.

Editors Note:

By closing the office at the end of May 1999 and storing the furniture in my garage, I've saved the LPSCC \$424/mo. for 20 months = \$8480. But it's cost me the use of my garage which I feel I can no longer do without.

Also available are an HP Laserjet III printer, a Sharp Z70 copier, and an IBM Selectric typewriter.

The 30+ folding wooden chairs are of very high quality and are in excellent condition. One clue of their value is that Joe Dehn has staked his claim on 10 of them.

PARTY POLL COMING SOON

CALLING'S NOT EASY TO DO
PLEASE BE EASY ON VOLUNTEER WHO CALLS YOUR HOME; OR EVEN BETTER, YOU CAN EMAIL YOUR ANSWERS IN
At the March 4th meeting, your Excom voted to conduct a poll of our members requested by our new Chair, Ray Strong, as a priority to enable increasing the visibility and growth of the LP in Santa Clara County by finding out what each member is willing and able to contribute. Volunteers will be needed to call our members. Maybe the reader can help with that. And if you're called, please be aware that it's scary for a volunteer to risk being rejected. So would you please go easy on your fellow Libertarians who are nice enough to volunteer for this difficult task.

One way to go easy on callers is not be called at all by just responding to the poll by email. But of course you'll need to know the email address and the questions, won't you? Well I asked Ray and here they are:

Email address: info@lpty.org
Priority Poll Questions:

Name:

Phone:

1. Can you attend the Libertarian Party business meeting on April 12 at the Campbell Community Center ? _____ **Yes No Maybe**
2. Can you help hand out literature at Gun Shows in San Jose ? _____ **Yes No Maybe**
3. Can you help hand out literature on Tax Day, April 16, at a post office? _____ **Yes No Maybe**
4. Can you help conduct this telephone poll? _____ **Yes No Maybe**
5. Could we have your email address? _____ **Yes No**
6. Can you suggest ways you could contribute to the LP, e.g., check as many as apply:
 - organizing a local Libertarian group
 - copy editing
 - writing letters to the editor
 - speaking
 - making phone calls
 - handing out literature
 - other _____ **What?**
7. Can you help with a
 - monthly pledge to support operations \$ _____ (**Now pledged? _____**)
 - one time money contribution? \$ _____
8. Do you have any message for the officers of the Libertarian Party? ■

TAX DAY 2001!

APRIL 15 IS OUR ANNUAL CHANCE TO INFORM THE SHEOPLE THERE'S A PARTY THAT WOULD GET TAXES OFF THEIR BACK

Soon coming to a post office near you will be the opportunity to remind members of the public that government costs too much, does too little we need, and too much we don't. Publicity Chair Zander Collier and many party volunteers will pass out literature and hold up signs that let the public know that the Libertarian Party sympathizes with them and wants to end the awful burdern of income tax.

Zander will need all of you who are able to participate in this fun event. You may even see your face on TV if he is succesful in his plans to create newsworthy activities for the media. To discuss with Zander how you might join the Tax Day team, please see his phone number and e-address on page 11. ■



Zander Collier
will lead Tax Day

ACTIVE PUBLICITY PLAN FOR 2001!

At the LPSCC Executive Committee meeting on March 4th, Publicity Chair Zander Collier submitted a proposed plan that is not expensive but at times will require some quick reaction participation in LP community outreach by you members. It features the following nine areas of activity:

Quick Turn-Around Pamphleting Apparatus
Letters-to-the-Editor Sunday
Public Service Announcements
Tax Day
Outreach: The Political Science Project
Nightclubs, Ravers, and Drug Freedom
The DMV
Abortion Clinics
Smokers and Drinkers

But Zander isn't just planning. He, Travis Jones, and others have already started doing it, as the following articles demonstrate. Zander's leading the charge, but three or four people won't be enough to make a dent on the minds of a million Santa Clara Countians. He'll need you to help too. Will you pitch in a little and make the party and its views visible to more and more citizens in our county?

JONES AND COLLIER OUTREACH AT THE MOVIE THEATER

Travis Jones and new Publicity Chair Zander Collier came up with a novel idea for outreach triggered by the drug war film "Traffic" which Jan and Feb was running #3 in the movies popularity derby. They went to Century theaters in Santa Clara with a fistfull of ISIL drug freedom pamphlets and Libertarian cards to hand to Traffic's outgoing audience. Asked about their initial public outreach adventure, Travis said "It felt good to be out there trying to reach people."

JONES LEADS LIBERTARIAN GUN SHOW PRESENCE IN MARCH

With the assistance of materials and advice from Roger Ver, LPSCC Membership Chair in '99 and '00, who with Dana Albrecht managed a Libertarian table at a number of Gun Shows at the Santa Clara County Fair Grounds in San Jose, Travis Jones led volunteers in appearing there on the weekend of March 10 and 11. If you receive this in time electronically, he may still need help. You can reach reach Travis Jones at: travis@keepandbeararms.com 650-969-2787

FIRST LTE SUNDAY MARCH 17TH AT STODDARDS SUNNYVALE

Want a fun way to spend part of a Sunday and help the cause of freedom too? Zander Collier invites you to come down and meet him for a 2 hour hangout session at Stoddards Brewery and Eatery once per month, and collaborate in creating publicity right on the spot. In his own words:

"Letters-to-the-Editor Sunday is a regularly scheduled meeting hosted by the Publicity Chair in Stoddard's Brewpub in Sunnyvale. Such meetings will continue to be held at Stoddard's Sunnyvale, until completion of construction of the Campbell location (slated May-June 2001). After the Campbell location is completed, meetings will resume there. The meetings are going to be held the 3rd Sunday of every month. I will bring a few various newspapers (e.g. the San Jose Mercury, the San Francisco Chronicle, the Metro, and perhaps a few smaller local papers) and make these papers available to anyone and everyone attending the meetings.

The purpose of the meetings is to provide a friendly group setting where participants can have a beer or two, be provided stationery, writing implements, postage, and envelopes for the effective writing of Letters-to-the-Editor. The meeting also provides for peer review of letters and gives those participating an ownership stake in the enterprise. Hopefully, this will provide a positive feedback loop thereby inducing participants to bring friends and family members."

Material and postal costs will be borne by the party. Just bring your eyes, brain, and pen or laptop. To get exact time or discuss with Zander see his phone and email information on page 11. ■

A full description of Zander's plan may be found online at <http://www.lpty.org/publplan.html>

To Stoddard's by freeway: 101 to Mathilda, south to Evelyn, east 4 blocks to Murphy & Evelyn

STILL HOLDING CARDS? NO CAR SIGN?

CAN'T GROW A PARTY THAT WAY!!

With the help of Don Cormier, I've been gradually calling members to get feedback on what you folks have been doing to get out the LP word. Thus far I'm sorry to say responses haven't been stellar - most people reached haven't used the 4 cards delivered with last newsletter, and very few said they wear bumper stickers or window signs.

Worst of all many said they weren't willing to use car signs period!

These two methods of

outreach - cards and car signs - entail about the most minimal time, effort, or cost imaginable. So friends, if you hope freedom will come without any effort at all on your part, please reconsider. Our numbers are small and we need to grow many fold to impact the election process. A poll last year by Rasmussen Research found that 1 of 6 Americans measure libertarian on the ASG quiz - more than measured conservative or liberal! But a poll last year locally showed that just 1 of 4 people could name the LP as one of the "3rd parties", and just 1 of 9 knew what it stands for. So we can grow by letting those 1 of 6 out there know there is a party that represents their views, but we have to find an efficient way to let them know about the LP. The media won't cover us. A reporter for the Mercury News covering the U.S. Senatorial race in California said to me last year when I offered an interview with our U.S. Senate candidate, Gail Lightfoot, "Don't you know our policy? We don't cover 3rd parties." And the few times they have covered the LP, it's always been in a way to tarnish its image. And advertising would wipe out our funds in little time without making a dent on the public mind. So the only way to consistently get a positive image to the public is for all of us to do it ourselves, regularly and often. And the only practical way to do that is wear signs and pass out cards and brochures while going through our normal activities outside our homes while driving or walking around. You really aren't being asked to do very much to further the freedom movement. Consider what our country's founders risked compared what you're being asked to do... ■

Don't Blame Me. I Vote

Libertarian

Find Out Why at:

LPTY.ORG/U



WINNABLE OFFICES FOR LP COMING UP FOR FILING IN MAY

Campaign Chair Scott Lieberman says there are non-partisan offices to be won this year - elections will be held in November - and that if you are interested in running for any of these offices, please e-mail him (see his info, page 11).

Cupertino City Council (3 of 5)
Gilroy City Council (3 of 5)
Los Altos City Council (2 of 5)
Palo Alto City Council (5 of 9)

Sunnyvale City Council (slots 1,2, and 3.

Cupertino School District (3 of 5)

Los Altos School District (3 of 5) (this one had 2 slots open in Nov 1999, and two non-incumbents filed and won by default)

Montebello School Dist (2 of 3)
Orchard School Dist (3 of 5)
Sunnyvale School Dist (3 of 5)
Palo Alto Unified School Dist (2 of 5)

Patterson Joint Unified School Dist (3 of 7)
Foothill-De Anza College Dist (2 of 5)

Lieberman said "I would love to see people running for the offices listed below, since they are the special districts of the kind we had two winners with in this county in November 2000. I bet if we fielded one person for each of the following 8 offices, and all of them ran paper campaigns that cost under \$300 excluding the candidate statement in the ballot pamphlet, that at least one would be elected by default."

Aldercroft Heights County Water Dist (2 of 5)
Burbank Sanitary Dist (3 of 5)
Cupertino Sanitary Dist (2 of 5)
San Martin County Water Dist (1 of 4)
Saratogo Fire Protection Dist (2 of 3)
Sliver Creek Valley Country Club (5 of 5)
S. Santa Clara Valley Memorial District (2 of 5)
Sunol Sanitary Dist (2 of 5)

Lieberman said "If you want to find out more info on any of these districts, type in their name (with quotes around the name) on the Google search engine on the web:

<<http://www.google.com>>" ■



Scott Lieberman

ANN STRANGMAN SPEAKS ON WHAT TO DO ABOUT COMING SOCIAL SECURITY CRISIS

ROSE WIEGLEY STILL SEEKING REPLACEMENT OR ASSISTANT

Practicing a speech she hopes to give to the American Association of University Women and to local senior organizations, and on which Speakers Bureau Manager Rose Wiegley has been coaching her, Ann Strangman gave her proposed solution to the coming Social Security crisis at the LPSCC Speakers



Ann Strangman (seated) in discussion with member at last year's LPSCC picnic

Meeting at Cocos on Mar. 8th. To emphasize the probability of a crisis she quoted federal cabinet members as admitting they have no long term solution to a trust fund which has no funds and a future U.S. demographic in which there will be fewer young workers and many more retirees. Her solution would takes steps toward privatization while keeping a means tested safety net for the truly needy. To support her position she she gave a number of online links for her audience to visit.

The speech was followed by a lively discussion among the attendees.

At the last Speakers Meeting, Rose told everyone that her job has become too demanding to allow her to manage the Speakers Bureau, and she is looking for a member to take over or become her assistant. She will continue to help speakers train, but needs someone to help by doing one or more of the following functions: running the speakers web site, seeking speaking opportunities in the community, organizing the speakers meetings, training speakers, and coordinating their appearances at events. If you want to try doing any of these, contact Rose, call (408) 244 - 9041 or email rwiegley@yahoo.com.



Speakers Bureau Manager Rose Wiegley is seeking replacement or assistant

MMM MEETING PROTESTED BY NRA LIBERTARIANS

Thanks to Libertarians Johann Opitz, John Inks, and Darryl Davis (NRA MC Chair) who attended and protested an organization meeting of the Million Moms March - a newly forming enemy of gun freedom - held the end of January at the Santa Clara Marriott, along with nearly 100 other NRAers. At the meeting MMM local chapter chairman Janet Conn introduced the various speakers including a man who's son was killed, San Jose Police Chief Bill Landsdown, Los Gatos Police Chief Larry Todd, Assistant Santa Clara County District Attorney Stan Voyles, and MMM founder Mary Leigh Blek. Outside the meeting Opitz and others protested against MMM and in support of gun freedom under the 2nd amendment. According to an NRA attendee, Lansdowne spoke in favor of gun control although he'd said the opposite at an NRA meeting.

Johann said "The rest of us were at the intersection into the Marriot with plenty of signs for passing motorists to read. Marriot's security tried to make us go across the intersection away from the Marriot but an arriving LEO agreed that we were on public sidewalk and could remain. We had 70-90 at the intersection (which has a traffic light, thus those stopped had a good opportunity to read our signs). We had a fair amount of support from passing motorists. And of course all those entering Marriot got greeted with our signs.

Marriot certainly wasn't happy with us but couldn't do much -- I doubt they'll have the MMMs back again. We were even joined at the intersection by a couple staying at the Marriot. One motorist entering wanted to know what Marriot had done wrong.

The room was set up for 200 (can hold 250) and had about 70 total in attendance -- the turn out for the MMMs was very poor, must have cost the MMMs plenty, and the local MMMs must be very disappointed. (Sniff, Sniff)"

A local NRA attendee said "Clearly, the most important lesson is that we need to acknowledge that our adversaries intend to slowly legislate us out of existence, and we need to develop remedies against their efforts. The next lesson is that the MMM do not acknowledge the failures of gun control and are oblivious to the effects this will have should they be allowed to pursue their agenda further."

OPINIONS

Share your thoughts on making our party more successful and advancing the individual freedom with responsibility movement



Marvin B. Rudin

LPSCC MEETINGS TO DATE - WHERE'S THE BEEF?

by Marv Rudin , Editor

The party definitely should have a comprehensive administrative structure. Things like having a constant mail address and phone number, having a knowledgeable person, if available, to answer the party's phone line, having the party phone number in all county phone books so people can reach us, having a consistent Central Committee meeting place and time, having an accurate and well conceived set of financial accounts, and a constant email address and fax number should all be established. However the primary purpose of the party - the purpose which the administrative functions are there to serve, namely, dissemination to the public of our principles, and ultimately the election of Libertarians to office - should always be our priority. And since we can't adequately perform our primary purpose yet because our numbers and finances aren't large enough, expanding the number of Libertarians as fast as possible is of paramount importance. And that's going to take a big dose of publicity and advertising and of "sales" effort, which for a political party is usually called member "acquisition" or "recruiting" because "sales" sounds too commercial. And who in the LPSCC is responsible to lead these much needed activities? The Publicity and Membership chairs.

Under these circumstances one wonders how we can already have held three Excom meetings without either agenda requiring a word of constructive critical discussion with these two chairs about their plans for their two functions. True, at the last meeting, goals were set and a publicity plan was passed out. And a budget was given the Publicity Chair. But the plan itself and how to achieve the goals were not discussed. And with two months now gone since our January election, no plan has been submitted yet by the Membership Chair. That's three meetings that went approximately 2-1/2 hours each - 7.5 total hours - in which administrative functions - some of low priority or easily handled by going with existing structure - were addressed in profuse detail, but these two most important activities were ignored as if plenty of time remains to look at them later. No wonder the party has been stuck in slow or no growth for so many years! It's difficult enough to grow an organization fast if that's your priority. It's practically impossible if it's not.

Of course the administrative functions are needed, but excepting a mailing address which was in limbo because the mail service we were using got driven out of business by the USPS, they really weren't urgent. Regarding the phone, I'd been answering the phone for 3 years and was willing to continue. I'm home a lot because I have to be there - I do business from my home office. The Treasurer from last year agreed to run again, and his books and procedures were established last year. Since he is the main user of the mailing address to receive checks and bills, and is retired and therefore available to arrange a new address during the day, he could easily have been assigned the task of setting up a new address without the lengthy discussion on the matter. As it turned out that's what the decision was anyway after all the discussion. And the lengthy discussion about a fax number, after I revealed that there hadn't been any need for an incoming fax to the party in 3 years was a travesty! Where are our priorities?? Perhaps one important administrative matter would have been an annual audit, and a review of the accounting system to ensure visibility of net cost for each project. But that subject was never raised!

Well that's now water under the bridge. Hopefully the two chairs handling the priority functions will move ahead on their own and in its next and subsequent meetings the Excom will set and adhere to a policy of emphasizing adding registrants as fast as possible as our first priority and dues paying members as our second. Of course, when the day comes that we have the numbers, campaigning for public office will be the priority. But with registrations at 0.75% of the electorate we're not even close to being there yet. ■

This is a sequel to the article "Letters Are A Good Old Idea" run in the Feb. SCL (read it on web at <http://www.lpty.org>)

How To Write Letters To The Editor

edited version of article by Richard Rider
Chair Emeritus, LP of San Diego County

Short, concise letters are always more likely to be published than long, meandering ones; try to keep them under 150 words — for big papers, keep them under 100 words. The longer letters are also more likely to be edited — it's better that you do your own editing.

Ever notice how you read letters to the editor in the paper? Most people read the shorter letters first and then perhaps later read the longer ones. Thus your shorter letter has a better chance of being read.

WHAT TO WRITE? Unlike single-issue or special-interest groups, libertarians can select from an enormous range of subjects. Replying to editorials, agree or disagree, is very effective. Every day the news offers us all too many topics on which to comment.

Be timely; try to respond within two or three days of the article's publication. Pick an issue of particular importance to you — don't be afraid to let some passion show through.

Here are some stylistic considerations:

1. State the argument you're rebutting or responding to, as briefly as possible, in the letter's introduction. Don't do a lengthy rehash; it's a waste of valuable space and boring to boot.
2. Stick to a single subject. Deal with one issue per letter.
3. Don't be shrill or abusive. Editors tend to discard letters containing personal attacks. Even though you're dying to call Jesse Jackson a preachy parasite, stifle the urge.
4. Your letter should be logically organized. First a brief recitation of the argument you are opposing, followed by a statement of your own position. Then present your evidence. Close with a short restatement of your position or a pithy comment ("Jimmy Breslin says possession of firearms should be limited to law enforcement officers. I say when only the police have guns, the police state is just around the corner.").
5. Use facts, figures and expert testimony whenever possible. This raises your letters above the "sez you, sez me" category. For instance: "Anthony Lewis calls for taxing the rich as a way to balance the budget. Is he aware of the fact that if we confiscated the entire income of the top wage earners in this country (those with income above \$200,000), this would run the federal government for exactly 8 days?"

Readers respect the opinions of people with special knowledge or expertise. Use expert testimony to bolster your case ("George Will claims we need to draft to defend America. But General Edward C. Meyer, Army Chief of Staff, recently stated . . .").

6. Proofread your letter carefully for errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Newspapers will usually edit to correct these mistakes, but your

OPINION PAGES POLICY

The Opinion Page(s) are primarily a place for opinions about local news and party operations especially outreach ideas/news. Up to two pages will be allocated at the tail end of the Santa Clara Libertarian for the editor's opinion piece and for letters-to-the-editor and opinion articles by members. Please email (snail mail only if you have no email capability) your letters/articles to me at rudin@lpty.org. Please keep material as compact as you can without sacrificing content and I will try to include all submittals, carrying some over to future issues if necessary.

piece is more likely to be published if it is "clean" to begin with. Read your letter to a friend, for objective input.

One suggestion is that a letter shouldn't be mailed the same day it is written. Write, proofread and edit the piece. Then put it aside until the next day. Rereading your letter in a fresh light often helps you to spot errors in reasoning, stilted language and the like. On the other hand, don't let the letter sit too long and lose its timeliness.

7. Try to view the letter from the reader's perspective. Will the arguments make sense to someone without a special background on this issue. Did you use technical terms not familiar to the average reader?

8. Should your letter be typed? In this day and age, generally yes. Double or triple space the letter if it is short. For faxing purposes, we appreciate it if the letter is all on one page, so single spacing might be the only option available unless you shorten it.

9. Direct your missives to "Letters to the Editor," or some similar sounding title.

10. Always include your name, address, day-time phone number and signature. The papers will not publish this information, but they may use it to verify that you wrote the letter. If we are fax broadcasting your letter, do not put a date on it. We may have to wait a day or two before broadcasting it out, depending on how many letters are waiting for dissemination.

11. Most important — WRITE! Do not try to do a perfect letter. Just give it a good effort and send it off. Letter writing is the one thing that any one of us can do on our own without the need to work through a group. No committees are necessary. Just do it!

Don't be discouraged if your letter isn't published. The editor may have received more responses on that issue than he feels he can handle.

If we are faxing your letter, you will almost certainly be published somewhere. The only drawback is that we do not have a good feedback system, so you may not know which of the papers publish your letter, particularly the smaller ones. Good luck!

Officers:

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	paul@rako.com	ElizabethB@netgate.net	mtg@dehnbase.org

Editor's Note:

Dear friends,

Thank you for electing me newsletter chair for 2001.

This year, at the end of each issue there will be an opinion section with up to two pages of member notes and letters (including yours - if you can, please email so I don't need to type).

I publish monthly electronically, and quarterly by printing press and U.S. mail. To receive monthly newsletters electronically, email your request to me at rudin@lpty.org.

Best regards, Marv

Had a Libertarian outreach experience? Converted someone? Write about it to the editor! Send by: email to: scl@lpty.org mail to: 651 Princeton Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94087 Fax to: 408-738-1353

For party information, Call: (408) 243-2711 Email: info@sc.ca.lp.org Online: http://www.sc.ca.lp.org Fax: 1-954-827-3783 (also accepts Voice Mail)

This is the publication of the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County, a non-profit political organization.

THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY



of Santa Clara County

P.O. Box 60171 Sunnyvale, CA 94088-0171

Please Print:

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Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

The Libertarian Party is the party of principle. To assure and affirm that our party never strays from its principles, we request our members to sign the pledge below. (Non-signers cannot vote on party business).

I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals.

Signature: _____

Membership Application

- \$25 Basic
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$250 Sponsor
- \$500 Patron
- \$1000 Life

Plus an additional contribution to the LPSCC:

- Monthly pledge
- One-time donation

Total:

Payment Method:

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VISA or MasterCard (circle one)

Credit Card #: _____

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**HI FELLOW LIBERTARIAN-
I'M YOUR NEW CHAIR FOR
2001. I WANT TO SEE YOU AND TO
MEET YOU AT OUR UPCOMING MEETING
ON **APRIL 12TH** AT THE CAMPBELL
COMMUNITY CENTER (PLEASE SEE
DETAILS INSIDE ON PAGE 4 AND MARK
YOUR CALENDAR)**



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